



Friant Dam



Above and below, remnants of
Old Friant Road Bridge



Photograph Credit: Winetta Owens

FRIANT DAM AND THE OLD FRIANT ROAD BRIDGE

Friant Dam is located on the San Joaquin River, 16 miles northeast of downtown Fresno, Calif. The dam, completed in 1942, is a concrete gravity structure, 319 feet high, with a crest length of 3,488 feet. The dam controls the San Joaquin River flows and provides for downstream releases to meet water delivery requirements above Mendota Pool; provides flood control, conservation storage, and water diversions into Madera and Friant-Kern canals; and delivers water to a million acres of agricultural land in Fresno, Kern, Madera, and Tulare counties in the San Joaquin Valley. An additional function of Friant Dam began in October 2009 as the first experimental water releases were made as part of the San Joaquin River Restoration Program that will eventually lead to a restored salmon run in the river below.

Located directly across the road from Friant Dam is the Old Friant Road Bridge. The concrete structure was once used by vehicles, bicyclists and motorcyclists. The broken bridge was destroyed in the flood of 1951